

Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, DC 20554

In the Matter of

Restoring Internet Freedom

WC Docket No. 17-108

COMMENTS BY THE NATIONAL DIVERSITY COALITION

***Net Neutrality Must Be Reexamined in the Context of Broad and Often Unpredictable
Advances Over the Last Five Years***

NATIONAL DIVERSITY COALITION
15 Southgate Avenue, Suite 200
Daly City, CA 94015
Phone: (650) 952-0522
Fax: (650) 952-0530
Email: advocacy@naacoalition.org

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Net Neutrality Must Be Reexamined in the Context of Broad and Often Unpredictable Advances Over the Last Five Years

The National Diversity Coalition (NDC) has met on many occasions over the last four years with FCC commissioners on a broad range of issues, including net neutrality. The members of the NDC represent our nation's 130 million minorities and a large portion of the 70% of Americans who live from paycheck-to-paycheck.

Our initial perspective on net neutrality was generally favorable to regulatory rules promulgated or sought to be promulgated by the FCC to eventually ensure that America was number one in broadband speed and provided such at the lowest cost in the world.

However, during the last four years, fundamental changes have occurred in the marketplace that question the benefits of an orthodox net neutrality perspective, particularly as it applies to low-moderate income families.

For example, Australia sought to be number one in internet by many apparently commendable state actions that have failed. See, *New York Times* of May 12, 2017, "How Australia Bungled Internet Modernization: Cautionary Tale in Broadband Backwater."

As the *New York Times* describes, eight years after Australia began what seemed like a very commendable and unprecedented broadband modernization effort, its average internet speed is well behind that of the U.S., Western Europe, Japan and South Korea. In fact, Australia has been rated as number 51 in internet speeds behind even Kenya and Thailand.

It should be noted that eight years ago, Australia was the first nation to develop a total national plan to cover every household and business. This Australian "National Broadband Network" was intended to bring advance fiber-optic technology to every home and business with the cost to be shared by the government and the private sector.

It is for these types of reasons that the NDC welcomes private investments with the goal of high-speed, low-cost internet for all families with a special goal of being number one in the world within ten years. Please see, for example, Google's (Alphabet) recent announcement to create a connected high-tech city in Toronto, Canada from scratch. Please see, *San Francisco Chronicle* of May 12, 2017, "Alphabet Unit Buys Toronto as Digital City."

Considering Australia's failed government efforts and new efforts by private industry, such as Google, to achieve our goals of being number one in the world, particularly for low-moderate income families, we urge the FCC to consider calling a national conference within 60 days of the closing of the public comment period to discuss the plans not just with traditional broadband providers, such as Verizon and AT&T, but the untraditional, such as Google, Facebook, Apple and Microsoft, to fulfill the needs and dreams of 130 million minorities. Members of the NDC pledge to actively participate.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Faith Bautista

Faith Bautista
CEO, National Diversity Coalition
President & CEO, National Asian American Coalition

/s/ Jack Miranda

Jack Miranda
Secretary, National Diversity Coalition
Vice Chair, Orange County Interdenominational Ecumenical Council and on behalf of the
National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference representing 40,000 Latino Evangelical
Churches throughout the nation

/s/ Mark Whitlock

Mark Whitlock
Chair, National Diversity Coalition
Senior Minister, COR AME Church, Irvine, CA
Director of Corporate Partnerships, 5,000 African Methodist Episcopal Churches
Chair, Orange County Interdenominational Alliance
Executive Director of the Cecil Murray Center for Community Engagement at USC

/s/ Gilbert Vasquez

Gilbert Vasquez
Treasurer, National Diversity Coalition
Chair, Los Angeles Latino Chamber of Commerce

/s/ Robert Gnaizda

Robert Gnaizda
General Counsel, National Diversity Coalition
General Counsel, National Asian American Coalition